

# Let's Dance!



# Presented By:

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**Becky Brown**

*CESA 7 WSPEI Family Engagement Coordinator*



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# Goals for today



Today You Will Walk Away With ...

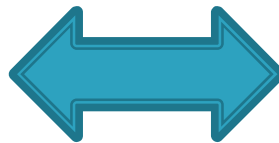
- ▶ The importance of family engagement in special education
- ▶ Family points of view within special education
- ▶ Best practices of family engagement to strengthen school-family partnerships



# A Dance of Partnerships

“Without music, there is no dance. Without communication, there is no partnership.”

-Fialka 2012, pg. 127



# Reflection Time

- ❖ How involved were your parents in your education?
- ❖ What have you learned from your coursework and/or as a parent?
- ❖ What does “family engagement” mean to you?



# Importance and Meaning of Parent Involvement and Family Engagement

[http://www.123rf.com/photo\\_17983126\\_family-in-a-domestic-garden.html](http://www.123rf.com/photo_17983126_family-in-a-domestic-garden.html)



Parent Involvement

&



Family Engagement

[http://www.123rf.com/photo\\_20705730\\_african-american-family-man-woman-boy-child-mother-father-son-playing-baseball-together-outside.html](http://www.123rf.com/photo_20705730_african-american-family-man-woman-boy-child-mother-father-son-playing-baseball-together-outside.html)



# Foundation of Family Engagement

## Epstein's 6 Types of Family Involvement

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning at Home
- Decision Making
- Collaborating with the Community





# Parent Viewpoints



# The 3 Questions All Parents Have

1. Do you know who we are?



2. Do you care about my child?



3. Can I trust you?



# Research shows

- ▶ **When parents are involved, students have:**
  - Higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
  - Better attendance
  - Increased motivation
  - Lower suspension
  - Decreased use of drugs, alcohol, violence
- ▶ **When middle & HS parents stay involved, students:**
  - Make better transitions
  - Maintain quality of work
  - Develop realistic plans for their future
  - Have higher graduation rates
  - Seek postsecondary education



# Major Family Factors Impacting Student Success

- ▶ Parents' Expectations
- ▶ Family Participation in Education
- ▶ Parents' Perception





# Benefits of Family Engagement for Schools


- ▶ Improved levels of achievement & outcomes
- ▶ Better attendance, motivation and attitudes
- ▶ Positive school climate and enhanced reputation
- ▶ More family members active in decision making
- ▶ Improved teacher morale & retention
- ▶ Increased workforce confidence and competence




# How do schools measure Family Engagement?

## Indicator 8


Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that **schools facilitated parent involvement** as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities (includes children ages 3-21).



# Parent Survey Items Related to Meaningful Family Engagement

- 1) I am considered an equal partner with teachers and other professionals in planning my child's program.
  - 5) All of my concerns and recommendations were documented on the IEP.
  - 11) Teachers are available to speak with me.
  - 12) Teachers treat me as a team member.
- 

# Parent Survey Items Related to Meaningful Family Engagement

- 16) Teachers and Administrators respect my cultural heritage.
  - 19) The School communicates regularly with me regarding my child's progress on IEP goals.
  - 22) The School offers parents a variety of ways to communicate with teachers.
  - 25) The School explains what options parents have if they disagree with a decision of the school.
- 



# Core Belief One

All parents have dreams for  
their children  
and want the best for them.

Henderson, A., Mapp, K., Johnson, V. and Davies, D. 2007. *Beyond the Bake Sale*, New York, New York: The New Press.

# Core Belief Two

All parents have the capacity to support their children's learning, regardless of how little formal education they may have or what language they may speak.

Henderson, A., Mapp, K., Johnson, V. and Davies, D. 2007. *Beyond the Bake Sale*, New York, New York: The New Press.

# Core Belief Three

Parents and school staff  
should be  
equal partners.

Henderson, A., Mapp, K., Johnson, V. and Davies, D. 2007. *Beyond the Bake Sale*, New York, New York: The New Press.

# Parent Perspective



Minnie Pearce-Tate

Parent Representative & Parent/Community Engagement Consultant

National Coalition of ESEA Title 1 Parents

[http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement\\_forum/highlights-panel4.html](http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement_forum/highlights-panel4.html)



# Core Belief Four

The responsibility for building partnerships between school and home rests primarily with school staff, especially school leaders.

Henderson, A., Mapp, K., Johnson, V. and Davies, D. 2007. *Beyond the Bake Sale*, New York, New York: The New Press.

# Professional Perspective



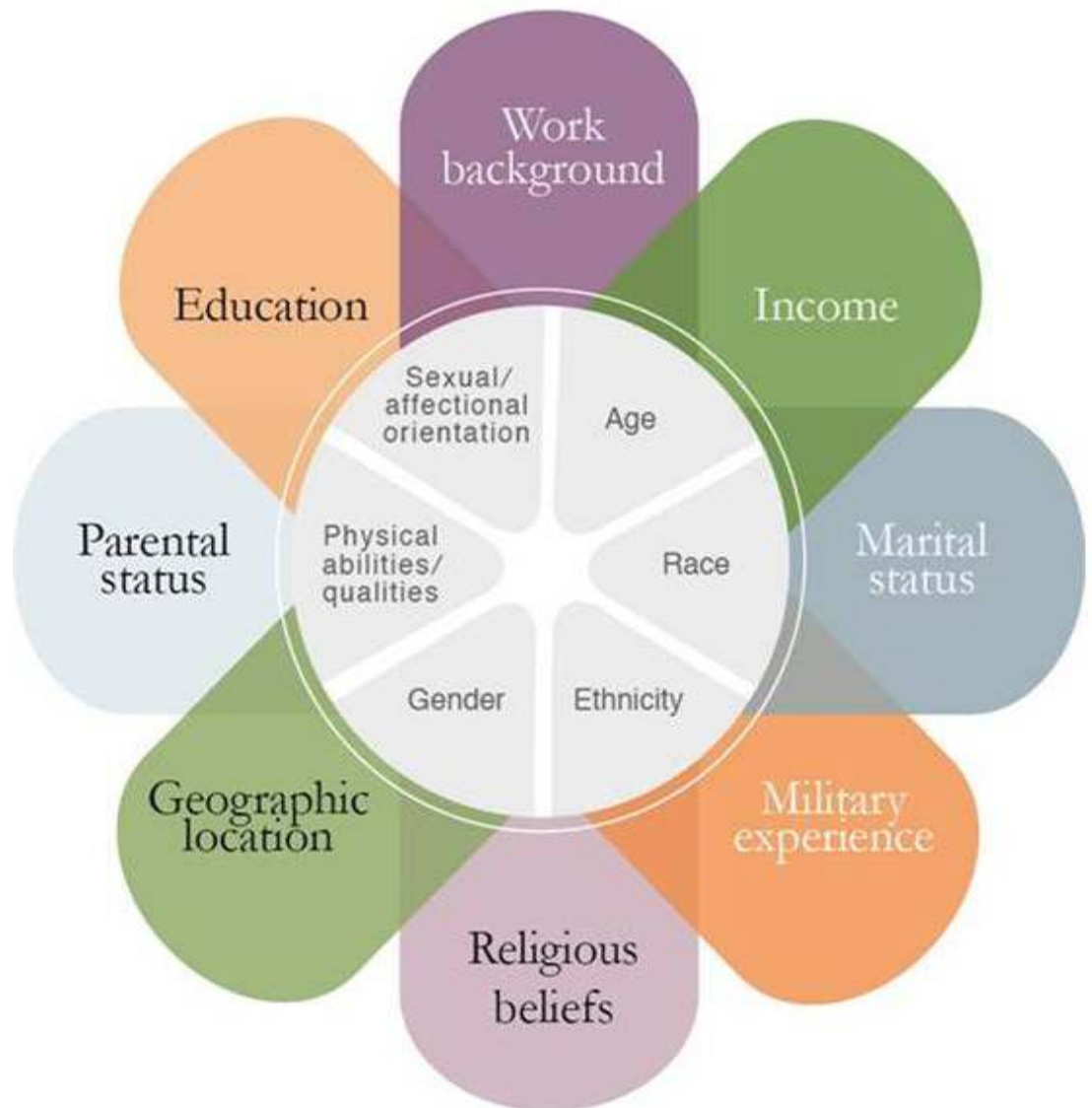
Ron Mirr

President - RM Consulting

[http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement\\_forum/highlights-panel1.html](http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement_forum/highlights-panel1.html)

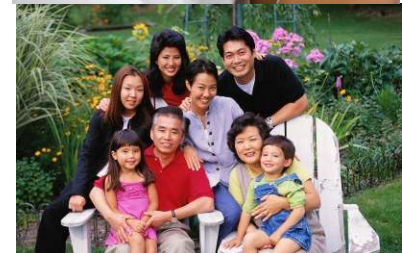
# Every Family is Unique.

- What is Culture?
- What is Cultural Sensitivity?



# Understanding Diverse Families

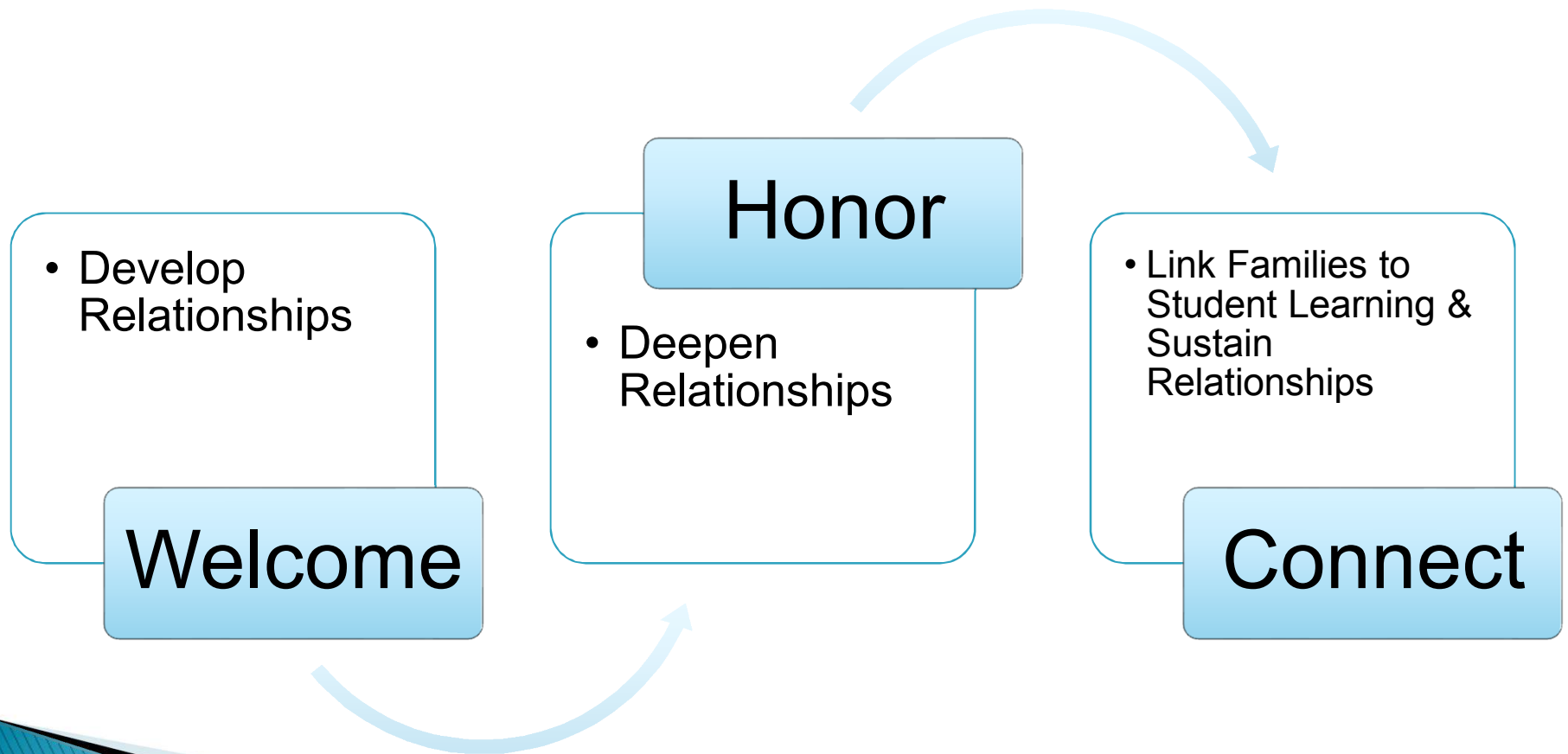
- View of Disability
- Family Roles & Responsibility
- Decision Making
- Religious Beliefs
- Language
- Access to Information, Resources, & Services
- Additional Stressors





# Best practices

## ▶ “The Joining Process” between Schools & Families



# Welcoming: Develops Relationships

- ▶ Put out the welcome mat
- ▶ Enroll the whole family
- ▶ Create a warm, friendly building
- ▶ Make sure people are accessible
- ▶ Set customer service standards
- ▶ Put on the personal touch



# Honoring: Deepen Relationships

- ▶ Show respect at all times
- ▶ Give parents a voice in major decisions
- ▶ Recognize families' contributions
- ▶ Respect families' circumstances
- ▶ Set ground rules together
- ▶ Accentuate the positive



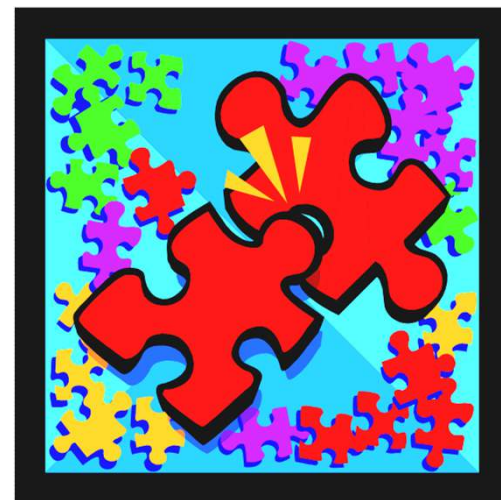
# Connecting: Link Families to Student Learning & Sustain Relationships

- ▶ Link parent activities to student learning
- ▶ Exhibit student work
- ▶ Make home visits
- ▶ Show parents how much staff care
- ▶ Invite parents to observe in class
- ▶ Open a Family Center



# The IEP: Creating the Puzzle

- ▶ Putting a good IEP together requires information from many sources.
- ▶ Each member of the IEP Team brings a valuable piece of information about the child - their piece of the puzzle.





# Parents As Equal Partners

## **Parent's role as a partner in the IEP process:**

- ▶ To come prepared to describe their child's strengths, needs, and preferences as well as other pertinent information that will help the IEP Team create a plan for their child to be able to work toward their goals
- ▶ To review all educational records
- ▶ To participate in all meetings of the IEP team
- ▶ To participate in any group that makes decisions on placement



# Family Friendly IEP Activities

Teachers can:

- ▶ Have an agenda prepared
- ▶ Acknowledge parents immediately and have participants introduce themselves.
- ▶ Make sure parents have a current copy of their child's IEP and any draft IEP forms
- ▶ Find a family friendly setting for the meeting
- ▶ Send the family questionnaire to fill out ahead of time
- ▶ Follow-up phone call after the meeting



# Just One of Many Dances



Every Step



Is Different



# Actionable Next Steps:

## **1. Do something today.**


One quick thing. Pick a low-hanging fruit.

## **2. Assess where you are.**

Take stock of your current practices around parent involvement  
- those being undertaken voluntarily and those actively encouraged by the school.

## **3. Create a long-term plan.**

Adjust or adopt new practices that both encourage and support parent involvement in student learning and school success.



# State & National Organizations


- ▶ WSPEI
  - ▶ WI FACETS
  - ▶ WI Family Ties
  - ▶ Family Voices of WI
  - ▶ Alianza Latina
  - ▶ CYSHCN
  - ▶ WI BPDD
  - ▶ DRW
  - ▶ Autism Society of WI
  - ▶ DAWN
  - ▶ CREATE
  - ▶ Parents Plus
  - ▶ Parent 2 Parent of WI
  - ▶ PTA
  - ▶ Mental Health America of WI
  - ▶ VSA Wisconsin
  - ▶ WI Council for the Blind & Visually Impaired
- 



# Websites

- ▶ WI Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative [www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org)
  - ▶ WI Family Assistance Center for Education, Training, & Support [www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org)
  - ▶ WI Special Education Mediation System <http://www.wsems.us/>
  - ▶ WI Dept. of Public Instruction <http://dpi.wi.gov/>
  - ▶ WI Transition Initiative Grant <http://www.wsti.org/>
  - ▶ The Harvard Family Research Project <http://hfrp.org/>
  - ▶ Project Appleseed: National Campaign for Public School Improvement <http://www.projectappleseed.org/chklst.html>
  - ▶ National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) <http://www.ncpie.org>
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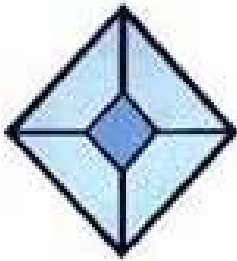
# Books of Interest

- ▶ *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships* by Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, & Don Davies, 2007
  - ▶ *Bicultural Parent Engagement: Advocacy and Empowerment* edited by Edward M. Olivos and Oscar Jimenez-Castellanos, 2011
  - ▶ *A Cord of Three Strands: A New Approach to Parent Engagement In Schools* by Soo Hong, 2011
  - ▶ *Engaging All Families: Creating a Positive School Culture by Putting Research into Practice* by Steven M. Constantino, 2003
  - ▶ *Family Partnership Working: A Guide for Education Practitioners* by Rita Cheminais, 2011
  - ▶ *Handbook of School-Family Partnerships* edited by Sandra L. Christenson and Amy L. Reschly, 2010
  - ▶ *Inviting Families into the Classroom: Learning from a Life in Teaching* by Lynne Yermanock Strieb, 2010
  - ▶ *(Mis) Understanding Families: Learning from Real Families in Our Schools* edited by Monica Miller Marsh and Tammy Turner-Vorbeck, 2010
  - ▶ *Parents and Professionals Partnering for Children with Disabilities: A Dance That Matters* by Janice M. Fialka, Arlene K. Feldman, and Karen C. Mikus, 2012
  - ▶ *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools, Second edition (2011)* by Joyce L. Epstein
- 

# Online Resources

- ▶ Handbook on Family and Community Engagement  
[http://online.unitedway.org/site/uwaservices/brand/assets/ost/2\\_engagement/External%20Content/Family\\_Community\\_Engagement\\_Handbook.pdf](http://online.unitedway.org/site/uwaservices/brand/assets/ost/2_engagement/External%20Content/Family_Community_Engagement_Handbook.pdf)
- ▶ WI DPI Family and Community Engagement Toolkit  
[http://dpi.wi.gov/files/ssos/pdf/toolkit-family\\_community\\_engagement.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/files/ssos/pdf/toolkit-family_community_engagement.pdf)
- ▶ Harvard Family Research Project: Family Involvement Network for Educators Newsletter  
<http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/fine-family-involvement-network-of-educators/fine-newsletter-archive>
- ▶ WI DPI Family School Community Partnerships <http://fscp.dpi.wi.gov/>
- ▶ Engaging Parents in School... <http://engagingparentsinschool.edublogs.org/>
- ▶ ParentNet Unplugged: Frank Conversations about Family Engagement  
<http://parentinvolvementmatters.org/blog.php>
- ▶ National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools  
<http://www.sedl.org/connections/>
- ▶ National PTA Family School Partnerships Implementation Guide  
<http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?itemnumber=1804>
- ▶ Fostering Parent and Professional Collaboration  
<http://www.parentcenternetwork.org/assets/files/parent%20and%20Professional%20Collaboration%20Research%20Brief%20-%20Final.pdf>
- ▶ Parents as Collaborative Leaders: Improving Outcomes for Children  
<http://www.uvm.edu/~pcl/modules.php>

# Contact Information:



**WI FACETS**  
**1-877-374-0511**  
**[www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org)**



**WSPEI**  
**1-877-844-4925**  
**[www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org)**

# Thank you

## Disclaimer Information

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